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## A Budget for the CINCs?

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the United States' experience in World War II, the American military has marched along an uneven path - from the National Security Act of 1947 to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 - of increasing unity of direction and effort. Throughout there has been a natural tension between the services who control the programs and budgets, and the unified commanders who are charged with the responsibility to execute the military's warfighting mission. The current drawdown in defense force structure and budgets makes the competition for dollars and resources all the more keener. This paper addresses the question, Are the services buying what the warfighters need? A study of "the system" and testimony of key figures indicates that we now have an acceptable balance of budget authority and responsibility.

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# **A Budget for the CINCs?**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

America has just experienced two great victories, the forty-year Cold War and the 100-hour war in the Gulf. These victories, however, have not brought peace to the Department of Defense. The collapse of the Soviet threat and the current budget crisis both indicate reduced defense spending. The current twenty-five percent force reduction may be followed by additional cuts in both force structure and spending as called for by President Clinton and Defense Secretary Les Aspin. Given the smaller resources and the more complex challenges of the new world order, it is imperative that we wisely eliminate waste and redundancy and that we learn to fight smarter.

How, therefore, should we organize?" This is certainly not a new question. The story of the American defense establishment since World War II is one of increasing unity of effort. Most recently, the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (hereafter referred to as the Goldwater-Nichols Act) greatly enhanced this "jointness." The focus of this paper is what may be termed the next logical step, budget authority for the unified commanders (CINCs). In short, will giving the CINCs a direct role in the budget process enhance American defense capability?

In addressing the question of CINC authority and budgets, I will briefly look at the development of the budget process and then defense organization since World War II. I will then examine the climate of change leading to the enactment of Goldwater-Nichols. U.S. Special Operations Command merits singular attention as the only unified command with a program and budget. Finally, I will evaluate the need for further change (budget authority) for the other unified commanders, particularly U.S. Transportation Command.

I have relied on articles, books, documents, and other studies for historical developments. My evaluation of the current status of the CINCs and budgeting system is based on the opinions and oral evidence provided by several CINCs and their staff members, senior officials and staffers from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and staff officers of the Navy and Air Force headquarters.

## **THE DEFENSE BUDGET SYSTEM**

Few things in American government have the notoriety of the defense budget. In constant dollars there has been little change since the close of the Korean War, while as a percent of the federal budget it has declined from over fifty percent to less than twenty-five.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it remains the single largest pot of discretionary spending and as such is a whipping boy for budget cutters and dollar-starved proponents of other programs.

Following World War II the defense budget was handled somewhat subjectively. President Truman allocated the Defense Department a fixed one third of the total Federal budget. President Eisenhower, likewise, had a fixed target equal to ten percent of the GNP.<sup>2</sup> Based on these ceilings, the Secretary of Defense would allocate a share to each service. The services were largely unconstrained in justifying their own programs in interest of national defense, and little was done to integrate or evaluate them.<sup>3</sup> The Secretary of Defense was little more than a referee in services' budget competition.<sup>4</sup>

In the early sixties Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara introduced an effort to rationalize the defense budgeting process. Relying on methods developed at RAND, McNamara formalized and centralized the process, providing the Defense Secretary the information and control systems necessary for analysis, manage-



ment, and decision making. PPBS (Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System), as it came to be known, was designed to tie together ends (national security) and means (federal budget). The Secretary could thus use his perspective - broader than that of the proposing service - to evaluate competing complex, costly, and long-term programs.<sup>5</sup>

Although PPBS was a tremendous management improvement, a primary shortcoming, as noted by former Assistant Secretary of Defense Lawrence Korb, was that the defense budget remained little more than the compilation of the service programs with no independent, joint review by the JCS.<sup>6</sup> This was somewhat corrected in the early years of the Reagan administration by inviting the CINCs of the unified and specified commands to participate in the Defense Resources Board deliberations twice a year.<sup>7</sup> The CINCs were asked to comment on the Defense Guidance and the service POMs. Additionally, beginning in 1984, the CINCs began submitting their programmatic concerns in the form of Integrated Priority Lists (IPLs) to the Secretary of Defense.<sup>8</sup>

Despite these changes, there was still concern in the 1980s that the views of the warfighters, the CINCs, were not adequately represented in the budget process. There was no statutory push to incorporate the unified commands in the process, and the services dominated both the budget and the process. The critical question remained: could the CINCs carry out their warfighting missions with limited voice in force development and sustainment?

## **DEFENSE ORGANIZATION SINCE WORLD WAR II**

*"Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort."*

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*

Prior to World War II the American defense establishment was comprised of the two independent cabinet offices, the Department of War and the Department of the Navy. Their areas of responsibility were historically well delineated - land and sea - and there was little need for unity.

Cooperative and coordinated efforts had been undertaken with some success in the Civil War, but failure to achieve good cooperation in the Spanish American War (1898) had led to the creation of the Joint Board of the Army and Navy in 1903. The purpose of the Joint Board was to provide coordination between the two services. This defense organization survived two fiscally driven attempts to consolidate into a single Department of National Defense with the general view of the military reflected by the Joint Board: "In the opinion of the Board, amalgamation of the two Departments would be a grave error."<sup>9</sup>

The challenges and experiences of World War II changed the direction of thought. Blaming the disaster at Pearl Harbor in part on the lack of cooperation between the local Army and Navy commands, Congress' first recommendation in the *Report of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack* was "That immediate action be taken to ensure that unity of command is imposed at all military and naval outposts."<sup>10</sup>

This localized, operational unity was matched by the decision to create a joint command effort at the highest level. After entering the war against Japan and Germany, President Roosevelt met with Prime Minister Winston Churchill in Washington, D.C. Among other things, the Arcadia Conference, as it was called, established a Combined Chiefs of Staff to coordinate the overall efforts of the British and Americans. The British already employed a committee of the chiefs of air, land, and sea forces to coordinate efforts and provide military advice to Churchill's War Cabinet. The US established a parallel group which became known as the Joint US Chiefs of Staff. Although lacking a legal charter or formal statement of responsibilities, the Joint Chiefs enjoyed the confidence of President Roosevelt and responded to the exigencies of total war. They formulated overall strategy and coordinated efforts.

Following the war, the Joint Chiefs were formalized as part of a new Department of Defense organization in the landmark National Security Act of 1947. In line with their wartime role, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) were designated the primary military advisors to the President. They were also appointed the

primary military advisors to the newly created Secretary of Defense who was to exercise overall control and direction of the national military establishment. The Secretary of the Navy, the renamed Secretary of the Army, and the Secretary of the now independent Air Force were retained with cabinet rank and seated on the newly created National Security Council.

Also following wartime precedent (particularly the unified European command held by General Eisenhower), the National Security Act established unified and specified commands.<sup>11</sup> These commands were initially headed by the service chiefs and, after 1953, by one of the services acting as executive agent. A major change was enacted with the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. It established an independent commander reporting directly to the Secretary of Defense.<sup>12</sup> This unified commander would have full operational control of all assigned forces while the military services would be responsible for administration and support of their respective forces. Congress described its intent as

to provide that each military department shall be separately organized...; to provide for their unified direction under civilian control of the Secretary of Defense but not to merge these departments or services;...to provide for the establishment of unified and specified combatant commands, and a clear and direct line of command to such commands; ...to provide for the unified strategic direction of the combatant forces; for their operation under unified command, and for their integration into an efficient team of land, naval, and air forces but not to establish a single Chief of Staff over the armed forces nor an overall armed forces general staff.<sup>13</sup>

Another major step had been taken towards organizational and operational unity, but safeguards and cautions were kept against the bogeyman of a truly unified military. This arrangement has remained essentially unchanged through to

today. Unfortunately, it set up the basic conflict of responsibility without authority or resources. The CINC must prepare for contingencies or war in his area, but the services - with an outlook toward modernization and new weapons systems acquisition - determine force structure and control the budget. This natural tension between the CINCs (desiring maximum readiness) and the services (emphasizing new equipment and force structure) continues today (witness the Air Force's scramble to obtain aircrew chemical protective gear - a readiness item always given a low priority in past budgets - during DESERT SHIELD), although the changes of the eighties have realigned the balance.

## **UNIFICATION AND GOLDWATER-NICHOLS**

### **THE CALL FOR REFORM**

With its confidence and prestige shattered in the aftermath of Viet Nam, the military underwent several significant changes. Most significant were the intentional creation of the all-volunteer force and the unintentional creation of the hollow force. Detente and nuclear arms talks colored the strategic picture. However, the many debates over military organization and strategy remained, by and large, academic until 1980.

In April of that year America suffered international humiliation with the failure of a clandestine operation to rescue the US embassy hostages in Tehran. The official inquiries and independent studies of this failure agreed on several key points.

First was the lack of a single organization to handle the planning and execution of such a mission. The rescue mission was planned ad hoc with various agencies and services playing a part as needed. Second, there was little effective joint training conducted. Most training had been conducted piecemeal at the various services' home training sites. Third, service participation was based on politics and compromise rather than efficiency and effectiveness. In sum, there was no integrated agency to plan, train, and conduct joint special operations.

Following closely on the heels of this debacle was the successful invasion of Grenada in 1983. The overall success of URGENT FURY did not prevent scathing criticism of many aspects. As with the Iranian rescue mission, these focused on the poor performance of the US armed services in operating jointly: Possible four service participation purely for political reasons; incompatible radios and codes; ad hoc arrangements including the assignment of then-Brigadier General Norman Schwarzkopf as Army liaison to the all-Navy staff of the overall task force commander. Although failure was not a result, frustration, inefficiency, and ineffectiveness were. Service, Congressional, and independent reports all addressed these concerns.

At the same time, the military was the target of a barrage of mismanagement charges. Defense Department critics made headlines with often virulent charges of fraud, waste, and abuse. Senator William Proxmire established his Golden Fleece Award for alleged fiscal abuses. Some allegations were trivialized such as four-hundred-dollar hammers, seven-hundred-dollar toilet seats, and three-thousand-dollar coffee pots. In fact, so many of these accounting oddities (despite most being found and corrected by DoD audits) surfaced that a spoof catalog was published touting "ordinary products at extraordinary prices."<sup>14</sup> The title of one book (a collection of acquisition horror stories) summed it up - *More Bucks, Less Bang*.<sup>15</sup>

It was under this climate of concern for the combat effectiveness of American forces and the efficiency of the defense organization that a community of

reformers developed. They ranged from defense analysts such as Edward Luttwak (*The Pentagon and the Art of War*) and James Fallows (*National Defense*) to government officials to the President-appointed Packard Commission.

In 1985 Senators Nunn and Goldwater, the ranking party members on the Armed Services Committee, commissioned an in-depth study on the inherent problems in Defense Department organization. This 685-page report, *Defense Organization: The Need for Change*, laid the groundwork for the first major reorganization of DoD in over twenty-five years and the most sweeping since 1947. One of the major foci was the role and authority of the unified commanders.

The report's study of the unified commands identifies several key problem areas of which two are linked directly to the budget process:

1. The weak authority of the unified commanders over their service components
2. The imbalance between the responsibilities of the CINCs and their ability to obtain needed resources

The weak authority of the unified commanders over their components concerns the control of resources. Simply put, the CINC is largely dependent upon the service components for resources, and the logistics chain runs around the CINC from the component to the parent service. In addition to not controlling his resources, therefore, the CINC must compete with the parent service for influence with the component, and the parent service has all the carrots.



The second issue is one of a responsibility-capability (or authority) mismatch. The programs and budgets are owned by the services. The CINCs have a channel to voice their needs and opinions, but that channel, the JCS, is weak. Furthermore, along the lines of the previous paragraph, the CINC has no authority to reallocate any funds, particularly between services.

This issue presents the common disparity of interests between the CINCs and the services. The CINCs are largely concerned with readiness and are interested in building up stocks of munitions, spares, or other sustainment assets. The services, on the other hand, are focused on spending their limited funds on modernization and acquisition of new systems. A CINC who saw the need in his theater to build up naval munitions instead of land force munitions would obviously have little success in trying to influence on service to give up funds or another to divert funds from acquisition or modernization.

Regarding the authority of the CINCs, the conclusions of the study are neatly summed in one sentiment:

While the Services have agreed to the concept of unified command, they have placed strict limits on how much unification could be achieved. Command by mutual cooperation among the Services continues to be the dominant arrangement in U.S. operational commands, just as it was prior to the Pearl Harbor disaster.<sup>16</sup>

## **INITIAL ATTEMPTS AT REFORM**

Even before 1980, Defense Secretary Harold Brown had taken an ameliorative step. He required quarterly letters from each CINC on their concerns and

requirements which he then sent to the appropriate offices.<sup>17</sup> In 1981 Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci formally invited the CINCs to provide direct, albeit limited, testimony to the Defense Resources Board (DRB) twice a year during major program reviews.<sup>18</sup>

This limited and somewhat after-the-fact input was broadened considerably in November 1984 when Assistant Secretary of Defense Taft issued a memorandum, "Enhancement of the CINCs' Role in the PPBS."<sup>19</sup> He authorized the CINCs to raise their own issues at the DRB, authorized direct communications between them and the services, and created the current system of CINC input to the formal PPBS. The CINCs were required to submit integrated priority lists (IPLs) outlining their highest priority needs. In response, each service was required to provide a separate annex to its POM addressing the CINCs' requirements and how they are met.

During this same period, the CINCs Initiative Fund was established providing limited funds for one-time requirements (not long term or large scale procurement).<sup>20</sup> This has primarily been used - with success - to buy C<sup>3</sup> equipment and upgrades. These incremental steps, however, were quickly eclipsed by major Congressional legislation.

## **GOLDWATER-NICHOLS**

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense reorganization Act of 1986 became law on the first of October of that year. The purpose was to redress many

flaws and weaknesses in the defense establishment, in particular strengthening its "jointness." In the opening statement of policy, the document declares the intent of Congress...

(3) to place clear responsibility on the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands for the accomplishment of missions assigned to those commands;

(4) to ensure that the authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders for the accomplishment of missions assigned to their commands;...

(6) to provide for more efficient use of defense resources;....<sup>21</sup>

A number of steps were taken that directly or indirectly strengthened the authority of the unified commander and his voice in the budget process. The most direct step was the authorization for CINCs to have their own funding for the purpose of joint exercises, force training, contingencies, and selected operations.<sup>22</sup> This section, however, has not been implemented. It was opposed, oddly enough, by Admiral Crowe, Chairman of the JCS, who had earlier testified, as CINCPAC, to the need for greater CINC authority.

Section 164 of the act provided the CINC with greater authority over his component commands. It removed some ambiguities and ascribes directive authority to the CINC regarding "all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics. This added authority in the logistics area is a significant move away from service control over components' activities and allegiances. The act further charged the Secretary of Defense with a periodic review of the combatant commanders in order to assign them any authority over any additional aspects of administration and support necessary to fulfill their missions.

Perhaps the most far-reaching aspect of Goldwater-Nichols was the tremendous strengthening of the position of Chairman of the JCS. The act not only put the Chairman clearly in charge of the Chiefs and the Joint Staff, with the singular advisory position to the Secretary and President, it also made him the primary spokesman for the combatant commanders. Section 163 directed the Chairman to obtain, evaluate, and communicate the CINCs requirements, along with his recommendations, to the Secretary and services. A new directorate (J-8) has been created specifically to handle PPBS issues and the inputs of the CINCs. For the first time, the CINCs have a key and influential advocate directly involved in all aspects of budget, requirements, and command.

In strengthening the power of the Chairman, the act also created the office of Vice Chairman (VCJCS). Although not specifically charged with advocate duties as is the Chairman, the Vice Chairman has become a primary representative of the CINCs and their interests in day-to-day business. For example, he chairs the Joint Resource Oversight Council. The first VCJCS, General Robert Herres, described his role in the JROC as linking

the needs of the CINCs with a judicious and appropriate degree of Service influence [and balancing] the views of the builders of force structure, that is, the Military Departments and their Service Chiefs, with the needs and views of the Combatant Commanders, that is, the CINCs.<sup>23</sup>

With the major exception of unified command budgets, the CINC-strengthening provisions of the Goldwater-Nichols Act have been implemented. Along with the prior initiatives of the 1980s the strength of the CINCs has greatly increased.

- One unified command, however, has gone well beyond the others: U.S. Special Operations Command has its own program and budget.

## **THE CASE OF US SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**

Amongst the many changes within the military establishment in the 1980s was the creation of several new unified commands - all recommended in Goldwater-Nichols. U.S. Transportation Command and Space Command reflected a general evolution of technological capabilities and efficiency. More reactive to the failure of the rescue mission in Iran were U.S. Central Command and, especially, U.S. Special Operations Command.

There were several motivations for a separate command to handle world-wide special operations. The failure of the Iranian hostage rescue mission highlighted the lack of joint cooperation and training in this area as well as the lack of a centralized planning agency. Retired Army Maj. Gen. John Singlaub described the mission as an attempt "to bring disparate units from all over the armed forces, from all over the world - and then put them into an ad hoc arrangement to do a very complicated plan."<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, with the "stalemate" of the Cold War, many strategists believed that low intensity conflict would be the prevalent form of warfare.

Defense analyst Edward Luttwak concluded:

[For Desert One] there was much interservice accommodation, very apparent in a plan clearly designed without a clue as to the realities of war.... [I]f one accepts that commando activities are important, one must use the commando organization as the center of excellence for

the armed forces as a whole, as a place of accelerated promotion, in order to attract the very best people who can both plan and command. Only then will one have a successful commando organization.... In other words, one cannot "fix" the problem under the existing system; rather, one must fix the system.<sup>25</sup>

Despite this growing school of thought, including many on Capitol Hill, the services were reluctant to fund special operations programs at the expense of their mainline, conventional programs and missions. In a report accompanying the FY86 Defense Appropriations bill, the House Appropriations Committee cited the Air Force's lack of commitment to special operations as evidenced by the MC-130 Combat Talon program manager position. From 1981 to 1986 it was filled by seven different officers, none of whom had special operations experience.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, the Carter administration, shortly after the failed rescue mission, validated the requirement for twelve additional Combat Talon aircraft. These were funded in the FY82 budget for procurement in 1983-4 and delivery in 1985-6. The program, however, was repeatedly slipped by the Air Force.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, by several accounts special operations capabilities (such as Air Force helicopters) had decreased in the five years after Iran, despite increased funding and the creation of the Joint Special Operations Agency. In 1986 a particularly generous Senator Nunn stated, "We are only slightly more prepared to carry out the Iranian hostage rescue mission today than we were when it failed."<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, tiring of the military's unwillingness to attend to special operations needs, Congress directed a fix to the problem in an amendment to the FY 87 Defense Authorization Act. U.S. Special Operations Command - complete

with a new DoD champion, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict - was established in April 1987.<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, this was done without full support or enthusiasm of the military. The slow response engendered additional Congressional guidance. The new law further directed budgetary authority for USCINCSOC and mandated DoD action on creation of Major Force Program\* (MFP) 11. Still not satisfied, a year later Congress directed that USCINCSOC prepare and execute its own POM and budget beginning in 1992.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, SOCOM now has acquisition authority for special operations-unique equipment (although it still relies on the services for other needs) and has established the Special Operations Research, Development, and Acquisition Center to that effect.<sup>31</sup>

This is not an altogether rosy picture for the "snake eaters." While gaining much control over his resources, CINCSOC must still rely on the individual services for most support functions such as bases, recruiting and basic training, depot maintenance, and so on. And this support must come from services that were reluctant to spend money on special operations when they owned them! Furthermore, for any significant new weapons system such as the V-22 Osprey, SOCOM is at the mercy of other services because it is far too small to handle such a program solely within its own budget. Even with other service support or interest

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\*DoD programs were divided into ten (now eleven) categories called major force programs. These include strategic forces, general purpose forces, airlift/sealift, etc.



to make an economically feasible buy, the other service may well drive the final specifications.

And not all problems have been resolved with combatant command status and budget authority. There was much contention over control of special operations forces during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and the loss of an AC-130 gunship is attributed by many to the misuse of special operations forces by non-special operations commanders.

The lines of control are also still muddy in other areas. For example, during the FY 93 POM preparation SOCOM tried to close an Air Force Reserve helicopter unit as "excess to requirements" with an eye on meeting a budget target.\* This was done without coordination with the Air Force Reserve and resulted in an OSD-refereed battle between the unified command and the service over ownership of the unit. The service position was that the reserve unit (and its funding) had been taken by USSOCOM and that if it was now excess it should be returned (with its funding) to pick up an air rescue mission; USSOCOM was acting like a corporate raider.

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\*This example comes from the author's experience while a force structure programmer for the Office of Air Force Reserve (AF/REX).

### **THE NEXT LOGICAL STEP?**

Although established for six years now, it will still be some time before a good evaluation of USSOCOM and its programming and budgeting authority can be made. USSOCOM's fiscal independence seems to be succeeding despite growing pains and some obvious weaknesses. The question for this paper remains, then, should what's good for SOCOM be extended to the other CINCs?

Straight off, the answer appears to be no. No one that I spoke to or interviewed (including several CINCs) advocated change to the current system. All believed that the enhanced voice of the CINCs since Goldwater-Nichols was sufficient, and that a proper balance appears to have been achieved between the services and the combatant commands.

The CINCs are certainly involved in the programming and budgeting process although admittedly without directive authority. They provide key input into the Defense Planning Guide from which the service POMs are ostensibly formulated, and they provide the JCS, OSD, and the services with their IPLs. They review the POMs along with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Program Analysis and Evaluation, and their views are represented on the JROC. They have direct communications with the Chairman and Secretary, and they have their day in the "court of last resort" - testimony before Congressional committee.

According to a knowledgeable JCS source, the CINCs have won 80-85% of the issue battles in the last few years. A good example, cited by another senior official, is the battle for the C-27, a small, "off-the-shelf" Italian transport aircraft. In the SOUTHCOM AOR the C-130 plays the role of strategic airlifter and helicopters provide tactical lift to the many small airstrips throughout South America. However, the high altitudes and long distances preclude helicopter use and the small strips common to this AOR preclude C-130 use in a major portion of the SOUTHCOM mission. These STOL transports would fill the gap between the helicopters and the Hercs.

In 1985 CINCSOUTH validated a requirement for ten light utility/STOL transports. With no action taken by the services, Congress acted in 1990 to authorize and appropriate funds for ten C-27s. In 1992, under increasing pressure, the Air Force provided money to operate six aircraft. As a member of the Air Force resource allocation team (RAT) for mobility programs I had a front row seat to the struggle. When charged with cutting approximately \$500 million from its programs to meet the new fiscal guidance for the FY93-98 POM build, the Global Mobility RAT was loath to "cut" Air Force programs in order to fund the purchase and operation of aircraft for CINCSOUTH.

Subsequent to my departure, a displeased CINCSOUTH went to the Secretary of Defense. The CINC, the Secretary, and the Chairman were upset with the Air Force and called for a re-evaluation of the original requirement. After the re-

evaluation showed a valid need for not ten but sixteen aircraft, the Air Force funded the program for the original ten.

This may not be the stereotypical issue. The CINC in this case may well have benefitted from the high priority and high visibility attached to the Latin American drug war. But perhaps even more poignantly, this example shows a validated CINC requirement - indeed a requirement of a CINC who claims to be the only combatant commander actively engaged in or prosecuting his war - that went unsupported, even opposed, by the service. In either light, the system worked and the CINC carried the day.

Another cogent idea expressed by senior leaders as well as some staffers was the need to divide missions and money. As one service chief put it, "Keep Title 10 and warfighters separate." The arguments are twofold. The first is a traditional American governmental concept - checks and balances. The institutionalized tension between the "warfighting" CINCs and the "train-and-equip" services forces healthy review and debate concerning requirements, missions, and resources. To allow the CINCs to resource their own requirements, this reasoning goes, would have the wolves guarding the sheep.

The other direction of their arguments is predicated along more practical lines. First, and quite simply, programming and budgeting are enormous endeavors. A tour of service headquarters in the Pentagon reveals the vast numbers of personnel and resources devoted to this task. Such resources are not now available to the CINCs and to create them would be costly and arguably duplicative.

Furthermore, the very role for which the unified commands were created was warfighting. To devote a major portion of his time and attention to resources (as the service chiefs do) would be unnecessarily distracting. Two CINCs were adamant about this point, and another flag officer involved in the process put it, the CINCs must focus on the here and now, not future requirements - the proper purview of the services.

To divide the budget up further among the CINCs could create other problems as well. How does one service or CINC account for services and facilities provided to another? Aerial refueling or AWACS services, for example, could become unnecessarily complicated or unwieldy if budgeted among different agencies or flown on a per-hour hire basis. While DBOF (Defense Business Operating Fund) may require this type of operation, it can only become more complicated with a fragmentation of the budget and force structure.

Furthermore, with the total defense budget being a fixed quantity, to provide money to each CINC means smaller budgets for everyone involved. The tendency would be toward fragmented budgets that would be less and less capable of funding requirements or fixing problems. As USSOCOM has discovered, it has full control over a budget, but that budget is too small to independently develop large systems, and it cannot count on the deep pockets of the services to solve its problems. Further fragmentation of the defense budget would only compound this - and possibly jeopardize the capability of the services to maintain large, independent procurement programs.

## **TRANSCOM's BATTLE**

An additional argument against CINC budgets was raised by a noted defense analyst that I spoke with. He argued that CINC control of the budget would generate (or degenerate into) regionalism. This is perhaps another twist to the fragmented budget argument above, but it also forces the question of the non-geographic CINC.

TRANSCOM, like SOCOM, serves no region but rather a specific, albeit joint, mission. Whereas SOCOM served no particular service and was a stepchild of each, TRANSCOM provides common user transportation to all services. The issue of separate budget authority for TRANSCOM merits its own evaluation.

A common sentiment of many - including several senior defense officials - is that non-mainstream weapons systems such as transport planes and ships are neglected in favor of "shooters." In the words of one Pentagon general officer, "if it doesn't make noise or doesn't move fast, it doesn't make it into the POM."

*Defense Organization: The Need for Change* - endorsed as "the single most important body of work on national security matters done so far this century" by the *Armed Forces Journal*<sup>2</sup> - cited as deficient those functions such as airlift and sealift which are not central to a service's own mission.

Although TRANSCOM was created at least in partial response to these charges, the sentiment persists. As an "airlifter" I am sensitive to the perceived slights and neglect of airlift by the fighter-dominated Air Force. Fellow Naval officers turned their noses up at the mention of sealift and confessed that in

general sealift has been used as a "cash cow" by the Navy for pursuing combat ship programs. However, in specific pursuit of this issue among rank and file Navy and Air Force staffers, I found great agreement with this sentiment, but I found few concrete examples.

In any case, the neglect of common user transportation seems also to have been resolved favorably, even without an independent budget. Foremost, of course, has been the establishment of TRANSCOM itself in 1987. Transportation issues now have a powerful voice in CINCTrans through the recently strengthened joint community. Going even further, a 14 Feb 92 SECDEF memo cemented the CINC's control over its components in peacetime (as opposed to wartime control only). This position was firmly stated in Department of Defense Directive 5158.4, dated January 8, 1993:

CINCTrans shall have combatant command of the Military Traffic Management Command of the Department of the Army, the Military Sealift Command of the Department of the Navy, and the Air Mobility Command of the Department of the Air force, in time of peace and time of war.<sup>33</sup>

Three other developments have also strengthened CINCTrans' hand against the services. First is the National Defense Sealift Fund (NDSF). Created by Congress at the request of the Navy as a revolving account to handle "build and charter" funds, the NDSF now stands at well over two billion dollars and has become a protected sealift shipbuilding fund. During the fall of 1992 an attempt by the Navy to cut cargo ships and add funds to other programs was halted by OSD, and newly appointed Secretary of Defense Aspin, when calling for a ten-

billion-dollar cut, protected the sealift funds.<sup>34</sup> The segregation and visibility of sealift funds clearly helps to ensure their survival.

Second is the establishment of the Defense Business Operations Fund (DBOF). Just now taking effect, DBOF is a management and accounting program similar to the several "industrial funds" previously in use. Paragraph F.2 of DoD Directive 5158.4 assigns control of all common user transportation accounts to CINCTrans. This gives budgetary execution and control (not programming) of airlift and sealift to TRANSCOM. A C-5 crew, for example, now essentially works for, and at the direction of, TRANSCOM.

The third development is less formal, but fundamentally as important as any other. This is the high visibility given strategic transportation, especially after DESERT SHIELD. Always a part of the defense debate (going back to the halcyon days of critics and reformers), the Congressionally mandated Mobility Requirements Study (conducted by the JCS) reflects the high level of senior government interest. This support for strategic mobility has been repeatedly echoed by Secretary Aspin, President Clinton and others.

It appears that TRANSCOM, like SOCOM, has the benefit of Congressional (and Presidential) support. Even without that ace, the strengthened joint community has solidly backed the development of TRANSCOM over service parochialism.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear from the evidence - official reports, testimony, studies, and most importantly the opinions of "the players" - that there is no continuing problem requiring a statutory fix. The myriad problems identified by the reformers of the late seventies and early eighties have been addressed. The reformers have largely disappeared although calls for efficiency and elimination of redundancy prevail (supported by the current federal budget crisis). More poignantly, "the system" worked during the huge deployments and operations of DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM (prompting one journalist to write a lengthy report on "How Congress Won the War in the Gulf"<sup>35</sup>).

The consensus indicates a strong satisfaction with current arrangements. Despite this satisfaction and the good track record enjoyed by the CINCs in resolving issues, Congressional interest remains: The ten billion dollar cuts directed by Secretary Aspin in January were hurried to meet a short suspense. This notwithstanding, Congressional committee members were quick to query testifying CINCs on their views and participation (they had none) in identifying those cuts. This continued "outside" interest should provide incentive to the military establishment to strive for further integration and cooperation (it's better to address your problems your own way than to have Congress fix them for you).

While satisfaction prevails today, we have already entered an environment far different than that which surrounded the Goldwater-Nichols reformers. The Cold War is over and the focus of the past forty-five defense budgets - the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union - is no more. As the budget shrinks dramatically, whether in pursuit of the peace dividend or merely in an attempt to keep the federal government solvent, the competition for dollars will get ferociously keener. "Roles and missions" - the reform issue *du jour* - complicates the matter further, as will any future parallel discussion on overseas basing and the unified command plan. As for now, the system ain't broke; don't fix it!

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